

tenaunce. flatereres been the develes enchauntours; for they make a man to wene of hymself be lyk that henys nat lyk. They been lyk to Judas, that bitraysed God; and thise flaterers bitraysen a man to sellen hym to his enemy, that is, to the devel. flatereres been the develes chapelleyns, that syngen evere Placebo. I reken flaterie in the vices of ire; for ofte tyme, if o man be wrooth with another, thanne wole he flaterer som wight to sustene hym in his querele.

SPEKE we now of swich cursyng as comth of irous herte. Malisoun generally may be seyde every maner power or harm. Swich cursyng bireveth man fro the regne of God, as seith Seint Paul. And ofte tyme swich cursyng wrongfully retorneth agayn to hym that curseth, as a bryd that retorneth agayn to his owene nest. And over alle thyng men oghten eschewe to cursen hire children, & even to the devel hire engendrure, as ferforth as in hem is; certes, it is greet peril and greet synne.

LET us thanne speken of chidyng and reproche, whiche been ful grete woundes in mannes herte; for they unsowen the semes of freendshipe in mannes herte. for certes, unnethes may a man pleyntly been accorded with hym that hath hym openly revyled and repaved in disclaundre. This is a ful grisly synne, as Crist seith in the gospel. And taak kepe now, that he that repaveth his neighbor, outhur he repaveth hym by som harm of peyne that he hath on his body, as Mesel, Croked harlot, or by som synne that he dooth. Now if he repave hym by harm of peyne, thanne turneth the repave to Jhesu Crist; for peyne is sent by the right wys sonde of God, and by his suffrance, be it meselrie, or maheym, or maladie. And if he repave hym uncharitably of synne, as, Thou holour, Thou dronkelewe harlot, & so forth; thanne aperteneth that to the rejoysyng of the devel, that evere hath joye that men doon synne. And certes, chidyng may nat come but out of a vileyns herte. for after the habundance of the herte speketh the mouth ful ofte. And ye shul understonde that looke, by any wey, whan any man shal chastise another, that he be war from chidyng and repavyng. for trewely, but he be war, he may ful lightly quyken the fir of angre and of wratthe, which that he sholde quenche, and pervaunture sleeth hym which that he myghte chastise with benigneitee, for as seith Salomon: The amyable tonge is the tree of lyf; that is to seyn, of lyf spirituel, & soothly, a deslaved tonge sleeth the spirites of hym that repaveth, and eek of hym that is repaved. Loo, what seith Seint Augustyn:

tyn: Ther is nothyng so lyk the develes child as he that ofte chideth. Seint Paul chide. And how that chidyng be a vileyns thyng bitwixe alle manere folk, yet is it certes, moost uncovenable bitwixe a man and his wyf; for there is nevere reste. And therefore seith Salomon: An hous that is uncovered and droppynge, and a chidyng wyf, been lyke. A man that is in a droppynge hous in manye places, though he eschewe the droppynge in o place, it droppeth on hym in another place; so fareth it by a chidyng wyf; but she chide hym in o place, she wol chide hym in another. And therefore: Bettre is a morsel of breed with joye, than an hous ful of delices, with chidyng. seith Salomon. Seint Paul seith: O ye bondes as bihoveth in God; & ye men, loveth youre wyves: Ad Colossenses, tertio.

AFTERWARD speke we of scornynge, which is a wikked synne, and namely, whan he scorneth a man for his goode werkes. for certes, swiche scorners faren lyk the foule tode, that may nat endure to smelle the soote savour of the vyne whanne it florisseth. Thise scorners been partyng felawes with the devel; for they han joye whan the devel wynneth, and sorwe whan he leseth. They been adversaries of Jhesu Crist; for they haten that he loveth, that is to seyn, salvacioun of soules.

SPEKE we now of wikked conseil; for he that wikked conseil yeveth is a traytour; for he deceyvet hym that trusteth in hym: At Achitofel ad Absolonem. But natheles, yet is his wikked conseil first agayn hymself. for, as seith the wise man: Every fals livyng man hath this propertee in hymself, that he that wol anoye another man, he anoyeth first hymself. And men shul understonde, that man shal nat taken his conseil of fals folk, ne of angry folk, or grevous folk, ne of folk that loven specially to muchel hir owene profit, ne to muche worldly folk; namely, in conseilynge of soules.

NOW comth the synne of hem that sowen & maken discord amonges folk, which is a synne that Crist hateth outrely; and no wonder is. for he deyde for to make concord. And moore shame do they to Crist, than did they that hym crucifiede; for God loveth bettre, that freendshipe be amonges folk, than he dide his owene body, the which that he yaf for unitee. Therefore been they likned to the devel, that evere been aboute to maken discord.

NOW comth the synne of double tonge; swiche as speken faire byform folk, and wikkedly bihynde:

or elles they maken semblant as though they speke of good intencion, or elles in game and pley, & yet they speke of wikked entente.

NOW comth biwreying of conseil, thurgh which a man is defamed; certes, unnethes may he restore the damage.

NOW comth manace, that is an open folye; for he that ofte manaceth, he threteth moore than he may perfourme ful of tyme.

NOW comth ydel wordes, that is withouten profit of hym that spekethe the wordes, and eek of hym that herkeneth the wordes. Or elles ydel wordes been the that been nedelees, or withouten entente of naturel profit. And albeit that ydel wordes been som tyme venial synne, yet sholde men douten hem; for we shul evere rekenynge of hem before God.

NOW comth janglyng, that may nat been withoute synne. And as seith Salomon: It is a synne of apert folye. And therefore a philosophre seyde, whan men axed hym how that men sholde please the peple; & he answerde: Do manye goode werkes, and spek fewe jangles.

AFTER this comth the synne of japeres, that been the develes apes; for they maken folk to laughe at hire japerie, as folk doon at the gawdes of an ape. Swich japeres deffendeth Seint Paul. Look how that vertuose wordes and hooly conforten hem that travailen in the service of Crist; right so conforten the vileyns wordes & knakkes of japeris, hem that travailen in the service of the devel. Thise been the synnes that comen of the tonge, that comen of ire, and of othere synnes mo.

Sequitur remedium contra peccatum Ire.

THE remedie agayns ire is a vertu that men clepen mansuetude, that is debonairetee; and eek another vertu, that men callen pacience, or suffrance. Debonairetee withdraweth and refreyneth the stirynges and the moevynges of mannes corage in his herte, in swich manere that they ne skippe nat out by angre ne by ire.

SUFFRANCE suffreth swetely alle the anoyances & the wronges that men doon to man outward. Seint Jerome seith thus of debonairetee: that It dooth noon harm to no wight, ne seith; ne for noon harm that men doon or seyn, he ne eschawfeth nat agayns his resoun. This vertu somtyme comth of nature; for, as seith the philosophre: A man is a quykyng, by nature debonaire and trefable to goodnesse. But whan debonairetee is

enformed of grace, thanne is it the moore worth.

PACIENCE, that is another remedie agayns ire, is a vertu that suffreth swetely every mannes goodnesse, and is nat wrooth for noon harm that is doon to hym. The philosophre seith: that Pacience is thilke vertu that suffreth debonairely alle the outrages of adversitee & every wikked word. This vertu maketh a man lyk to God, and maketh hym Goddes owene deere childe, as seith Crist. This vertu disconfiteth thyn enemy. And therefore seith the wise man: If thou wolt venquysse thyn enemy, lerne to suffre. And thou shalt understonde, that man suffreth foure manere of grevances in outward thynges; agayns the whiche foure he moot have foure manere of paciencies.

THE firste grevance is of wikked wordes; thilke suffred Jhesu Crist withouten gruechyng, ful paciently, whan the Jewes despised and repaved hym ful ofte. Suffre thou therefore paciently; for the wise man seith: If thou stryve with a fool, though the fool be wrooth or though he laughe, algate thou shalt have no reste.

THAT oother grevance outward is to have damage of thy catel. Ther agayns suffred Crist ful paciently, whan he was despoiled of al that he hadde in this lyf, and that nas but his clothes.

THE thridde grevance is a man to have harm in his body. That suffred Crist ful paciently in al his passiou.

THE fourthe grevance is in outrageous labour in werkes. Wherefore I seye, that folk that maken hir servants to travailen so greuously, or out of tyme, as on halydayes, soothly they do greet synne. Heer agayns suffred Crist ful paciently, & taught us pacience, whan he baar upon his blissed shulder the croys, upon which he sholde suffren despitous deeth. Heer may men lerne to be pacient; for certes, noght oonly Cristen men been pacient for love of Jhesu Crist, & for guerdoun of the blisful lyf that is perdurable; but certes, the olde payens, that nevere were Cristene, commendedden & useden the vertu of pacience.

A PHILOSOPHRE upon a tyme, that wolde have beten his disciple for his grete trespas, for which he was greetly amoved, and broghte a yerde to scourge the child; and whan this child saugh the yerde, he seyde to his maister: What thenke ye to do? I wol bete thee, quod the maister, for thy correctioun. forsothe, quod the child; ye oghten first correcte youreself, that han lost al youre pacience for the gilt of a child. forsothe, quod the maister, al wepyng, thow seyst